



Unemployment Insurance Benefit Rights Handbook



LOUISIANA WORKS™
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

www.LAWORKS.net

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT RIGHTS HANDBOOK



LOUISIANA WORKS™

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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The Department of Labor is a state agency utilizing state, federal, and private resources to provide the training, employment, assistance, and regulatory services necessary to increase employment and promote workplace safety and expanded employment opportunities in the state of Louisiana in a climate favorable to business, workers, and jobseekers.

YOUR LOCAL OFFICE ADDRESS AND EASY CALL NUMBER:

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(NAME)

(SS#)

(CLAIM TYPE)

(BYE)

APPOINTMENTS

DATE REPORTED	VISIT CODE	NEXT REPORT	TIME	INTV INIT

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Claims Requirements and Responsibilities

***Please read the following statements carefully before claiming unemployment insurance benefits. It is important that you ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.** * It is your responsibility to read and familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook. This booklet closely parallels but does not have the force of law or regulation.

WHAT YOU MUST DO TO RECEIVE YOUR FIRST CHECK

File each week by telephone using the “Easy Call System” method. Beginning the 1st Sunday after you file your claim, you must make a weekly claim for benefits using the Easy Call System. NOTE: If you filed your initial claim on Thursday or Friday, wait until the **following Wednesday or Thursday to make your first call to the Easy Call System. Thereafter, you should call on Sunday or Monday of each week. If you are directed to submit paper forms to claim your benefits, follow the instructions of your Job Center. If you do not submit a continued claim for a week, you will not be paid Unemployment Insurance benefits for such week. See Pages 11-16 of this booklet for further information regarding claiming weekly benefits.**

1. To meet the non-monetary eligibility requirements for receiving unemployment insurance benefits you must be able to work, available for work and conducting an active search for work. See complete instructions on page 10 of this booklet.
2. Each week, you must report all earnings before deductions including all wages, commissions, tips and gratuities when earned even if you aren't paid during that week.
3. You must report to your local Job Center when so instructed. **Failure to report when so instructed will result in a determination (decision) being made based upon available information. Should the determination result in a disqualification or denial of benefits, the disqualification or denial will remain in effect until the condition that caused the disqualification no longer exists. To remove a disqualification you must notify your local Job Center that you have met the requirements to have the disqualification removed.**
4. You must also report any job offers that you refuse to accept, including those to which you are referred by the Job Center, and any job separations that may occur after you last filed a new or additional (renewed) claim before submitting a subsequent continued claim for benefits. An additional claim is necessary after each separation to start a new claim series. You must also go into the local Job Center and file a renewal if you have a break in continuity in filing weekly continued claims, or if you have three or more consecutive weeks in which you report gross wages earned that are equal to or greater than your weekly benefit amount (WBA). You should report at such time if you once again have no wages or have wages less than your WBA.
5. You must notify the local Job Center immediately if you begin attending school or training, receive/begin receiving a pension, disability payments or workers' compensation or if the amount of such payments you receive changes.

***Interstate claimants (claimants who do not reside in Louisiana) must notify the Louisiana Liable Unit to report this information.**

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

Unemployment insurance provides financial assistance to workers who work for employers covered by the unemployment insurance law and are subsequently unemployed through no fault of their own. It does not include self-employed workers, railroad workers, elected officials, some commission sales people or workers for nonprofit or church-related organizations.

Eligibility is limited to citizens of the U.S. and legal aliens authorized to work during both their employment and unemployment periods. Unemployment insurance is paid for by a tax on employers.

You are cautioned that you must report fully and truthfully about conditions which affect your right to benefits, especially the reason for any separation from employment since the beginning of your base period. Your previous employers are contacted about your separations and are given the opportunity to protest your eligibility to receive benefits. Also, employer wages reported each quarter are cross-matched with records of wages earned as reported by you. Any differences in these amounts are checked and investigated.

REMEMBER: False or misleading information could result in a fraud disqualification or lead to criminal prosecution in some cases. Anyone convicted of making false statements to obtain or increase benefits will be guilty of a criminal offense punishable by fine, imprisonment or both. An alien convicted of a felony for unemployment insurance fraud could lose his/her right to work in this country and/or be deported.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

Unemployment insurance is a program designed to protect you when you lose your job through no fault of your own and you are able, available and actively looking for work. Its main objective is to give you an income sufficient for basic needs to help you during periods of unemployment.

Although every eligible worker has the right to collect unemployment benefits, it is important to remember that these benefits are made possible by a tax paid by Louisiana employers. No deductions are ever made from your wages for unemployment insurance purposes.

APPLYING FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

When you need to apply for unemployment insurance, do not accept hearsay about the program or let someone discourage your applying for benefits. When you become unemployed, you should go to the nearest Job Center to file a claim and register for work, or you can file your claim and register for work by personal computer on the Internet at www.LAWORKS.net. Delay in filing could result in loss of benefits to which you may be entitled.

The effective date of your new claim for unemployment insurance is always the Sunday prior to your reporting to the local Job Center to file the claim, or the Sunday prior to your starting your computer entry (unless you start on Sunday which makes that Sunday the effective date of the claim), not the date you became unemployed.

Always report with proper identification such as your social security card and valid driver's license. Your wage records are maintained under your social security number.

If you have worked in more than one state during the past 18 months, you should tell the unemployment insurance representative so these wages can be used to determine eligibility and your benefit amount. You should also provide the out-of-state employers' names and addresses.

If you have worked in another state but not in Louisiana and you wish to file in Louisiana, an interstate claim will be filed for you, or you will be told how to file the claim if the procedures differ in the other state. The other state decides your eligibility for benefits according to that state's laws. That state will also mail your checks to you, if you are qualified.

LOUISIANA INTERSTATE CLAIMS

If you worked in Louisiana and now live in another state, you will need to file a Louisiana interstate claim at the Job Center that serves your area. That office may file your claim in person or by telephone (consult your local telephone directory for the location of the office nearest you). That office will act as an agent for you and will file your initial claim for benefits and any requests for monetary reconsiderations that are necessary. Some states conduct all such business by telephone. Inquire locally. Some offices may also refer you for work registration and placement assistance.

Once your claim is filed, it will be administered by the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit in Baton Rouge. Questions concerning your claim should be directed to that office.

If you file a Louisiana claim and then move to another state, you must report immediately to the nearest Job Center/Job Service office in the state where you live and file a request for transfer of your claim.

While filing interstate claims against Louisiana, you must keep the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit informed of any changes in your address. This is important because most of the information sent to you through the mail cannot be forwarded by the postal service. Address changes must be submitted in writing. For identification purposes, all correspondence with the Interstate Liable Unit should include your social security number.

BASE PERIOD WAGE REQUIREMENTS

To be monetarily eligible for unemployment benefits, you must have earned a certain amount of wages (at least \$1,200.00) during your base period from an employer who is required to pay unemployment taxes. The base period is the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters before the quarter in which the claim is effective.

Each year is divided into four three-month quarters, which are:

First Quarter: January, February and March

Second Quarter: April, May and June

Third Quarter: July, August and September

Fourth Quarter: October, November and December

Your base period is determined by the Sunday effective date preceding the date you report to file your claim. See below.

IF YOU FILE A NEW CLAIM EFFECTIVE IN:	YOUR BASE PERIOD WILL BE BETWEEN
January, February or March	October of the Year Before Last And September of Last Year
April, May or June	January and December of Last Year
July, August or September	April of Last Year and March of this Year
October, November or December	July of Last Year and June of this Year

To receive unemployment benefits, you must have been paid at least \$1,200.00 in total base period wage, and wages must have been earned in at least two of the four quarters in the base period. Total wages paid to you in your base period must equal or exceed 1^{1/2} times your highest quarter of wages.

Only wages earned during the base period can be used to calculate your weekly and maximum benefit amounts.

Wages you earned prior to the base period, wages you earned during the calendar quarter in which you file your unemployment claim, and wages you earned in the calendar quarter immediately preceding the current quarter are not part of the base period and will not be used to establish your current claim for benefits.

MONETARY DETERMINATION

Shortly after filing your unemployment claim, you will receive a monetary determination showing your wages earned in each quarter of the base period. It will also show the name of each employer you worked for during the base period and the amount of earnings each employer reported per quarter. This determination will show your weekly benefit amount (WBA), your maximum benefit amount (MBA), and the benefit year and base period beginning and ending dates. The WBA is the maximum payment that you can receive for each week you claim benefits. The MBA is the total amount payable to you for the benefit year.

If otherwise eligible, you will be allowed one year to claim the maximum benefit amount of your claim, which covers up to 26 weeks or 6 months. After your maximum benefits are exhausted, you will not be allowed to file a subsequent claim for unemployment against your present paying state until the benefit year of the prior claim ends, unless the state is on extended benefits.

Should your base period earnings not equal 1½ times your highest quarter of earnings or if you earned less than \$1,200.00 during the base period, your monetary determination will show that you will be ineligible for unemployment benefits.

Carefully review the monetary determination for accuracy. Compare the wages listed with W-2 forms or check stubs to verify that wages reported by the employer are correct for the base period. If you determine that the wages on the monetary determination do not equal your calculated wages earned for that period, report to your local Job Center with proper proof of other wages.

REMEMBER: Should you disagree with the wages listed on the monetary determination, it is your responsibility to provide W-2's, check stubs, etc., to prove the monetary determination is incorrect. Your reported wages cannot be changed by your merely stating they are incorrect.

A monetary determination is not an appealable document. A reconsideration request must be made and proof of other wages submitted through proper channels for wage investigation. A sample monetary determination is included below for your convenience.

MONETARY DETERMINATION

MONETARY DETERMINATION
PROCESSED 04-11-2002

BENEFIT YEAR 04-07-2002 TO 04-05-2003

SSN	999-99-9999	WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT - \$	155
NAME	CLAIMANT JAMES O	MAXIMUM BENEFIT AMOUNT - \$	3337
		MAXIMUM NUMBER WEEKS -	21.5
BATCH	999	QUALIFYING AMOUNT - \$	10,734
LON	090	HIGH QUARTER AVG - \$	3,090
TYPEC	LA1	WAGE TOTAL - \$	12,362

BASE PERIOD 01-01-2001 TO 12-21-2001

EMPLOYER NAME	NUMBER	2001-1	2001-2	2001-3	2001-4
ABC COMPANY LTD	123456		5206		
XYZ INCORPORATED	234567	7156			

*****APPEAL RIGHTS*****

IF YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH THE WAGES SHOWN, YOU MAY REQUEST A RECONSIDERATION NO LATER THAN 04-11-2003.

PLEASE REVIEW THE WAGES AND EMPLOYER LISTED. IF WAGES ARE INCORRECT OR MISSING, TAKE THIS ENTIRE NOTICE AND ANY WAGE PROOF (W-2, CHECK STUBS, ETC.) TO YOUR LOCAL OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE.

MONETARY RECONSIDERATION

Once your unemployment claim has been established, it will not be recalculated except to reconsider errors or incomplete wage records. If your base period wages are incorrect on the monetary determination, you must report the error in person to the local Job Center. This can be done up to one year after the original monetary determination is issued.

Sometimes it takes a lot of work and research to obtain and verify wages and make all the necessary changes to the wage record files. Take your proof of earnings with you. During this time of reconsideration, you should continue to file for unemployment benefits weekly even though your claim might have been determined to be ineligible.

Upon completion of your reconsideration, should you be determined eligible, you will be paid for the weeks you have claimed up to that point in time, if you meet all other requirements. If you fail to claim benefits during the reconsideration time, you will not be paid for the earlier weeks claimed prior to the monetary reconsideration of your claim.

ADDRESS CHANGES – MOVING WITHIN LOUISIANA

Whenever you wish to correct an incorrect or incomplete address or change to a new mailing (or street) address after you last notified us, you must do so by accessing our web site at www.laworks.net and select the option FILE UI CLAIM. You will be required to enter your USER ID and PASSWORD (that you created when filing your initial claim.) This is necessary for your continued reception of mailed checks, blank payorders (when appropriate), and general notices or specific messages, such as 1099 forms at the end of each year. According to U.S. Post Office regulations, these various pieces of mail are not supposed to be forwarded by them. As a safety precaution, we will not ordinarily change such an address without a signed authorization on our form.

Interstate claimants may file their change of address on the Internet. (The active claimant may report to the local Job Center office with picture identification (such as a driver's license), social security card and Benefit Rights Information Handbook to request the change.)

RENEWALS

If you have an existing unemployment claim but: (1) you did not file a weekly application for benefits for one or more weeks, (2) you have had earnings equal to or greater than your weekly benefit amount for at least three consecutive weeks, or (3) you have had a separation from subsequent employment since you last filed a new or additional claim, you need to file a renewal of your claim. This may be done by Internet or in person in your local Job Center to make your claim active again. To avoid loss of benefits, do not delay renewing your claim, which is effective the week you renew.

If you have a layoff slip or other separation paper, bring it with you if you report in person. A layoff slip is not required to renew. Do not wait until your employer mails a layoff slip to you.

If you return to work, put this Handbook in a safe place. If you become unemployed again, bring it, your social security card and driver's license (or other picture identification) with you should you need to report to the local Job Center in person.

PARTIAL BENEFITS

You may be eligible to receive partial unemployment benefits if you are employed at your regular job but your work hours have been reduced temporarily to less than full-time and you are currently earning less than your weekly unemployment benefit amount. If you choose to file a partial claim for benefits, you do not have to make an active search for work with other employers during those weeks.

You are considered to be job attached to your present employer and are expected to return to full-time employment with that employer.

PART-TIME WORKERS

You may also be eligible for partial benefits if you are separated from your regular job and have accepted part-time work or odd jobs but earn less than your WBA. If you file a claim while working part-time, you will generally be required to make an active search for full-time work during each week that you claim benefits. A work search record form is enclosed at the end of this BRI handbook for your convenience. You must also report the wages you earned from this part-time work when you file your weekly claim for benefits.

WAITING PERIOD

Each unemployment claim is normally effective the Sunday date of the week in which the claim is filed. Benefits are claimed on a calendar week basis with each week beginning at 12:01 A.M. Sunday and ending at midnight Saturday.

Louisiana unemployment insurance law provides that the first week benefits would otherwise be paid is to be held as the “week of waiting.” No matter how long you have waited to file after becoming unemployed, you must serve a week of waiting before you can begin drawing unemployment benefits for subsequent weeks.

You should file the initial claim for unemployment benefits as soon as you become unemployed to minimize your loss of benefits.

ABLE, AVAILABLE AND SEEKING WORK

To meet the eligibility requirements of the unemployment insurance law, you must be able to work, available for work and actively seeking suitable employment. You must be available for part-time or full-time work in any position that is in your line of work or experience and pays at least 60% of your normal wage and equals or exceeds the local prevailing conditions for that type of work.

If you are ill, incapacitated or not able to work for any reason, for even one day during the week you claim unemployment benefits, then you are considered not able and available for work that week. This law applies to vacation, attending to personal business or anything that would prevent your being available for work each day of the week. Under these conditions, you would not be entitled to benefits for that week and must report to your local Job Center when you are able and available for work again.

This law also applies to attendance in school or training. If you plan to attend, or if you are attending a school, university or a training course when you apply for unemployment benefits, or later, you must notify the local Job Center. Interstate claimants should contact the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. Approved training status may be granted to you if it is determined that your training would be beneficial to you in obtaining employment. If your schooling/training is not approved and you continue to claim unemployment benefits, you will be required to make the regular in-person work search as directed by your local Job Center and your availability for work will be examined carefully.

WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENTS

To remain eligible for unemployment benefits, you must make an active search for work during each week that you claim benefits unless your local office finds that you are:

1. on a temporary lay off from your regular job or temporarily working reduced hours.
2. a member of an active craft union.
3. otherwise specifically exempted by your local Job Center.

You must make a minimum of one work contact per week or as instructed by your local Job Center. You must contact different employers for each week unless repeat contacts are approved in advance by the local Job Center. Your work search contacts must be made and recorded on the "Record of Work Search Contacts" pages provided in the back of your BRI booklet. It is very important that you keep a record of your contacts. Periodically you will be required to report to the local Job Center or mail an eligibility review form to your local Job Center. You will be instructed by the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System or by mail when you need to complete and report or mail this information form. Failure to return this eligibility review form as instructed could result in your being disqualified for benefits.

Interstate claimants will receive an eligibility review form in the mail. It must be completed and promptly returned to the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit.

If you are an active union member in good standing, you must maintain a paid-up membership or permit during each week you are claiming unemployment benefits. You must contact your business agent each week for possible available positions. Always bring your driver's license, social security card and your BRI handbook with you when you report in person to the local Job Center for any reason.

FRAUDULENT/FALSIFIED INFORMATION

When you file a claim for unemployment benefits, any falsifications, errors or omissions on the application or continuing claim information you provide can result in delay or denial of benefits. Overpayments, fraud disqualifications or legal prosecutions in some cases are possible.

You should always take sufficient time for the accurate completion of the application to file your weekly continued claim for unemployment benefits either by mail or by telephone.

VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEM INSTRUCTIONS

The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System, “Easy Call,” provides user-friendly access to general information concerning services provided by the different offices of the Louisiana Department of Labor and provides certain services by telephone rather than in person or by mail.

You may call for general information and to find out about your benefits Tuesday through Saturday. No payment information is available on Monday, as claims filed late Friday through Monday are not processed until Monday night.

To file your continued claim for unemployment benefits by telephone safely, you must call each week by conventional “corded” telephone (push-button or rotary). A cordless or cellular telephone may compromise confidentiality or emit signals affected by interference or static. The quality of your telephone connection is important for the proper processing of your weekly claim.

CAUTION: We recommend that you use only “corded” touch-tone or pulse telephones to access the “Easy Call” system. Generally, cordless, mobile or cellular telephones generate a less reliable signal and they may permit unauthorized access to your confidential social security number, PIN or other information transmitted by telephone.

You may use any type of corded telephone to call the “Easy Call” system. A push button telephone allows you to enter your responses by touching buttons. If you utilize a rotary phone, your answers must be spoken clearly with each number spoken separately. Remember, if you are speaking your answers, the number “0” should be said as “ZERO”. This method of claiming benefits allows you to use the telephone reporting system and avoid unnecessary trips to your local Job Center office and some postage expenses.

To file your continued claim, call the “Easy Call” phone number for your area. These numbers are listed in the back of this booklet. An IVR Unit will answer. A prerecorded voice will ask the eligibility questions one at a time. You answer “YES” or “NO” or a number by pressing the appropriate buttons on the telephone keypad or by speaking your answer as instructed during your call.

When entering information on the telephone keypad, on some questions you will be instructed to enter the pound sign (#). If you do not enter the pound sign (#) when instructed, your answer will not be accepted, and you will be asked to enter your answer again. The pound sign (#) is located on your telephone to the right of the zero at the bottom of the keypad. If you are speaking the numbers, it will not be necessary to say “POUND” at the end of your answer.

After each question, the system will repeat your answer. It is important that you listen to the information carefully to be sure that it is correct. If it is not, you may change your answer. The system tells you how to change your answer. You may not interrupt when warning messages are read.

If you are disconnected or hang up before the system tells you that your claim has been processed, you will have to call again to file your claim. You will have five seconds to respond to the message, then the selections will be repeated. If there is no response after the second time, the system will disconnect.

If you get a busy signal when you are trying to file your weekly continued claim, wait a few minutes and try again.

Contact your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit if you are filing an Interstate claim, or if you have any questions about how to complete the answers or how to use this Voice Response System. You should call the “Easy Call” number and read these instructions carefully before contacting your local Job Center.

You should file your weekly continued claims for unemployment benefits only as instructed by your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. If you are placed on the “Easy Call” system, do not complete and mail in any LDOL 28 forms (commonly called “turnaround pay order cards”).

HOURS: CLAIMING BENEFITS BY TELEPHONE

You may file a weekly claim for benefits any time Sunday through Saturday. However, there will be a short downtime each night for file maintenance and updates. For better service, you are encouraged to file your weekly claim for benefits any time Sunday or during non-business hours (5:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M.), Monday through Friday. After each week ending date, you will have seven calendar days to file your weekly claim by telephone.

The only week that you may claim by telephone is the week that ended on the Saturday before your call, which gives you only seven calendar days to file for that week. You must report to your local Job Center to claim any prior weeks or for any problems you may have. Interstate claimants should contact the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit for assistance.

No claim information will be available Monday. Claims filed on the weekend are not processed until Monday night. Therefore, your local Job Center cannot provide any information about your claim Monday. You should wait until Tuesday to contact your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit if you have any questions regarding your claim for benefits. See also the section of this booklet labeled “Late Filing.”

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN)

The telephone claims filing and benefit inquiry applications for “Easy Call” require that you enter a secret four-digit personal identification number (PIN). Your PIN protects you from having another person file your claim or obtain information about your claim.

You will select your PIN during your first call and either say or key the numbers into the telephone. Be sure you select a PIN that will be easy for you to remember because you must use the same PIN each time you call to file your weekly claim or get benefit information. We recommend that you not repeat the same numbers such as 1111, 9999, 3333, etc., or a number sequence such as 1234. Because you are responsible for its use, it is important that you never tell anyone your PIN.

If you believe that someone else may have discovered your PIN, you can easily change it through “Easy Call.” If you forget your PIN, immediately report in person to your local Job Center for assistance in establishing a new one. Be sure to bring proper identification with you. To maintain secrecy, the unemployment insurance representative will not give you a PIN but will arrange for you to establish a new PIN during your next telephone filing or benefit payment inquiry.

WARNING: Your PIN has the same legal authority as your signature on a paper document. PROTECT YOUR PIN; DO NOT GIVE IT TO ANYONE. If you believe someone knows your PIN, phone “Easy Call,” and change your PIN immediately. If you believe someone has accessed your claim file, immediately report to your local Job Center.

PREPARING TO CALL THE VOICE RESPONSE SYSTEM

Using the telephone to file your weekly claim is much easier if you take time to prepare before making your call.

1. Have a pencil and paper handy to write down information that you may need to take with you to your local Job Center, should you receive instructions to report.
2. Be sure to know your social security number. (If you are calling from a rotary phone, you should speak clearly and say each number separately. The number “0” should be said as “ZERO.”)

EXAMPLE: If your social security number is: 0 7 8 - 0 5 - 1 1 2 0

You should say: ZERO SEVEN EIGHT
ZERO FIVE
ONE ONE TWO ZERO

3. If you are calling to file your weekly claim for benefits and you earned wages during the week, be sure that you know the gross amount you received or will receive (rounded to the nearest dollar). This is the amount you earned before any deductions for taxes, insurance, etc.

EXAMPLE: Wages of \$105.49 should be entered by pressing or saying:

ONE ZERO FIVE

Wages of \$105.50 should be entered by pressing or saying:

ONE ZERO SIX

4. You may not be asked all the questions shown in this booklet. However, you must answer all questions that the IVR system asks you.
5. As you continue through this telephone system, each entry or answer you speak will be repeated. You will be asked to press “1” or say “YES” to indicate that your answer is correct or to press “9” or say “NO” to change your answer.

WARNING: Be sure that all statements you make when applying for unemployment benefits or while you are receiving benefits are accurate. You must report your gross earnings each week if you work anytime while receiving unemployment benefits.

Unemployment benefits are checked by computer, and employers are notified to verify the claim information you provide regarding earnings, work searches, etc. Attempts to claim or receive benefits fraudulently can result in loss of benefits, fines and/or imprisonment.

MAKING THE “EASY CALL”

Call the “Easy Call” number for your area. When your call is answered, you will hear the following important message:

“Thank you for calling the Louisiana Department of Labor. If you have touch-tone service, press “1.” If you do not have this service from your telephone company, but you do have a telephone capable of switching from pulse to tone, switch to tone now and press “1.”

For information about unemployment insurance benefits, press “1” or say “ONE.”

The IVR system allows you to choose the area of information in which you are interested. The options listed below indicate the different areas that may be selected.

To get to the information listed in the options below, simply press the appropriate option number, or say the option number designated for the information in which you are interested.

- OPTION 1: To file for unemployment insurance benefits, to create your personal identification number or to change your personal identification number, press 1.
- OPTION 2: To inquire about your unemployment insurance benefit payments, your claim balance or the date your claim ends, press 2.
- OPTION 3: For general information about unemployment insurance benefits, press 3.
- OPTION 4: To find the location of an office near you, press 4. This listing does not include offices outside of Louisiana.
- OPTION 5: For information about the appeals process or a specific appeal, press 5.
- OPTION 6: To obtain the total amount of unemployment insurance benefits paid to you, press 6.

To hear these choices again, press or say “7”.

REMEMBER: You will have five seconds to respond to the message. If the IVR system receives no response or receives an invalid response within that time span, it will repeat the selections once. If there is no response or if there is an invalid response after this repeat, it will respond with an exit message.

During your first call, you will choose OPTION 1. Then you will be given the following choices.

1. File for your weekly benefits on an existing claim.
2. Establish your personal identification number (PIN).
3. Change your PIN, and

4. If you have not yet established a claim for unemployment insurance benefits.

ESTABLISHING YOUR PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (PIN)

Before you can file a weekly claim for benefits, you must establish your PIN. This can be done on the third work day after filing an initial claim. During your first call, and after selecting Option 1 from the UI menu, you will hear the following:

REMEMBER: If you are calling from a rotary phone, speak clearly and say each number separately. For the number “0,” you should say “ZERO.”

“To establish your personal identification number, or PIN, press “2” or say “TWO.”

1. Please enter your nine-digit social security number.
2. You are now going to create your personal identification number. This number must be known only to you. If you lose this number, it cannot be retrieved. Please enter a four-digit personal identification number now.
3. You have entered “####”. If this is correct, press “1” or say “YES.” If this is not correct, press “9” or say “NO.”

Congratulations! You have now established your own PIN. Remember, this number must be known only to you. If you lose this number, it cannot be retrieved. If you lose this number, contact your local Job Service office in person as soon as possible for assistance. If you are filing an interstate claim, please contact the Interstate Unit at the telephone number provided to you, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Central Time, Monday through Friday. To return to the previous menu, press “8” or say “EIGHT.” If business has been concluded, press “9.”

TO FILE FOR WEEKLY BENEFITS

REMEMBER: Before filing for your weekly benefits, be sure to have at hand your social security number, your PIN and the gross amount of wages, if any, that you earned during the previous week.

Once your unemployment claim has been filed and processed, you may use “Easy Call” to claim your weekly unemployment benefits over the telephone. You should be prepared to follow the sample shown below when utilizing this system.

Call “Easy Call” at the number given to you when you filed your new or additional claim. Once you have established your PIN, you may file a weekly claim for benefits when the first week of your new or additional claim has ended.

After reaching the main menu and choosing Option 1, you will hear the following:

“Enter your nine-digit social security number.

You have entered “999-99-9999.” If this is correct, press “1” or say “YES.” To change your answer, press “9” or say “NO.”

Please enter your personal identification number, or PIN.

We are now ready to process your claim for unemployment insurance benefits for the week beginning Sunday, MM/DD/YY, and ending this past Saturday, MM/DD/YY. You must answer the following questions truthfully. Any attempt to obtain benefits by entering false information can result in a loss of benefits, fines and imprisonment. If any question is left unanswered or if this line is disconnected for any reason before completion, your payment for this week will not be processed. To show that you understand this warning message, press "1," or say "YES" now. To show that you do not understand this warning message, press "9," or say "NO" now.

As you continue through this telephone system, each entry you make will be repeated, and you will be asked to press "1" on your telephone key pad or say "YES" to indicate that your answer is correct or press "9" or say "NO" to change your answer.

1. Did you work during the week beginning Sunday, MM/DD/YY, and ending this past Saturday, MM/DD/YY?

If yes, press "1" or say "YES," now. If no, press "9" or say "NO" now."

If you press "9" or say "NO," the system will go on to question 2. If you press "1" or say "YES," you will hear the following:

"Your answer indicates you did work during the week beginning Sunday, MM/DD/YY, and ending this past Saturday, MM/DD/YY. If this is correct, press "1" or say "YES." If this is incorrect, press "9" or say "NO."

You must now report your gross weekly wages. **REMEMBER: you must report these earnings whether or not you have been paid yet.** Enter the whole dollar amount followed by the pound sign (#), or speak the dollar amount clearly and distinctly. **Do not include cents.**

EXAMPLE: If you earned \$103.75 before any deductions, you would enter the following on your telephone key pad: 1 0 3 #

Or you would say: "ONE ZERO THREE."

The amount of wages you reported is \$103.00. If this is correct, press "1" or say "YES" now. If this is not correct, press "9" or say "NO" now.

Are you still employed at this job or working part-time, or were you separated from this employment due to a lack of work? If yes, press "1," or say "YES" now. If no, press "9," or say "NO" now.

Did you quit this job or were you fired? If yes, press "1," or say "YES" now. If no, press "9," or say "NO" now.

Your answer indicates that you are still employed at this job or you are working part-time, or that you were separated from this employment due to a lack of work. If this is correct, press “1,” or say “YES” now. If not, press “9,” or say “NO” now.

OR

Your answer indicates that you either quit or you were fired from your employment. If this is correct, press “1,” or say “YES” now. If not, press “9,” or say “NO” now. To respond to questions 2 through 5, answer “YES” by pressing “1” or saying “YES,” or answer “NO” by pressing “9” or saying “NO.” After you have answered each question, we will verify your answer. To confirm your response, press “1” or say “YES.” To change your original response, press “9” or say “NO.” If you answer negatively, we will ask the question a second time. You will be allowed to change each original answer only once.

1. Did you refuse work during this week?
2. Did you begin receiving workers’ compensation, social security, a veterans’ administration allowance, or any other pension during this week?
3. Did you begin attending school or a training program during this week?
4. Were you able, available and looking for work during this week?

If one or more of your answers indicate a potential issue on your claim, you will be instructed to contact your local Job Center before claiming a future week or if you are an Interstate claimant, you will be instructed to call the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. Your failure to report as instructed may result in a loss of benefits to you.

After answering the questions above and before final processing of your application for weekly benefits, the following warning statement will be announced:

“You are reminded that Louisiana’s Employment Security Law requires that you make an active search for work each week and record this work search in your Benefit Rights Booklet. You are applying for unemployment insurance benefits for the week beginning Sunday, MM/DD/YY, and ending this past Saturday, MM/DD/YY. You must have answered the preceding questions truthfully. Any attempt to obtain benefits by entering false information can result in a loss of benefits, fines and imprisonment.

To show that you understand this warning message and agree that the information you have provided is correct to the best of your knowledge, press “1,” or say “YES” now. To show that you do not understand this warning message, press “9,” or say “NO” now.

If you no longer wish to claim benefits for this week, just hang up the telephone now.”

After pressing “1” or saying “YES,” you will hear the following:

“Your payment for the week ending Saturday, MM/DD/YY, will be processed.
Thank you for calling the Louisiana Department of Labor. Good-bye.”

This is a brief overview of the recorded message you will hear when filing your unemployment claim for weekly benefits by telephone. The messages you hear during your “Easy Call” could vary depending on the information you enter.

REMEMBER: If you are disconnected or hang up before the system tells you that your claim has been processed, you will have to call again to file your claim. You will have five seconds to respond to the questions, then the selections will be repeated. If no response is indicated or spoken after the second request, the system will disconnect and you will have to call again.

LATE FILING

After each week ending date you will have seven calendar days to file your weekly claim for benefits by telephone. If you fail to file within this period, you must contact your local Job office in person to have your claim reinstated before you are allowed to file by telephone again.

For example: If you are filing for the week ending Saturday, the 6th, and have not filed your claim for weekly benefits by 5:00 P.M. Saturday, the 13th, you should report to your local Job Center the following week.

If you file your weekly continued claim by “Easy Call” after about 5:00 p.m. on Friday, you should wait until at least the following Tuesday to file your claim for the next week. This delay on filing the subsequent week will prevent your getting an incorrect break-in-continuity error message on the latter week.

This problem is caused by the lateness of filing for the earlier week combined with the normal delay in our Monday night processing for all claims filed after 5:00 p.m. Friday. If you file such a latter week on Sunday or Monday, the earlier week will not have been officially entered on the benefit history and will cause the erroneous message.

PAYMENT INFORMATION BY TELEPHONE

“Easy Call” allows you to get information about your unemployment claim by telephone. Allow at least one business day after filing by telephone before calling this system for payment or claim information.

You may use “Easy Call” to find out about your benefits Tuesday through Saturday. If you get a busy signal when calling, wait a few minutes and try again.

You should call “Easy Call” for any information you need before contacting your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit.

REMEMBER: No payment information is available Sunday or Monday as claims filed on the weekend are not processed until after close of business Monday night.

CALLING FOR PAYMENT INFORMATION

Choose Option 2 for information about your latest unemployment benefit payment, your claim balance or the date your claim ends. The system will tell you the week ending date of the last week you claimed, the amount of the payment, the remaining balance and the year ending date of your claim. If you claimed benefits but were not paid, you will be given information regarding the status of your claim.

OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE BY TELEPHONE

No social security number or PIN is necessary for Options 3, 4 or 5. You simply select which option you are interested in by pressing or saying the required number on your telephone.

Option 3 provides general information about unemployment insurance. You will be able to listen to information regarding eligibility requirements for unemployment insurance, the waiting period, work search requirements, periodic eligibility reviews and what to do if you are working part-time while receiving unemployment benefits.

Option 4 provides the address of the nearest local Job office based upon your five-digit zip code. Out-of-state offices are not listed in this directory.

Option 5 provides general information about the appeal process. For information about a specific appeal, you will need your social security number and PIN.

Option 6 provides the total amount of unemployment benefits paid to you in a calendar year.

DIRECT DEPOSIT OF BENEFIT PAYMENTS

Direct Deposit is a convenient, safe and reliable way to receive your benefits. You may have your unemployment benefit payments deposited directly into your account with any bank or financial institution in the country.

If you choose Direct Deposit, it is recommended that you take a check or a deposit slip (marked “VOID”) showing your account number and your bank’s ABA number to your local Job Center. You will also need to take some form of identification with you.

Your local Job Center will ask you to complete and sign an “Agreement for Direct Deposit” form. They will mail the original agreement, along with a copy of the check marked “VOID” to the Louisiana Department of Labor’s UI/Tax Accounting Section and give you a copy for your files. If a problem develops with your Direct Deposit, you will be notified by this department and provided information to assist you in resolving the problem. Payments will be sent to your mailing address until the problem is resolved. It is important that you keep your copy of the “Agreement for Direct Deposit” form. Interstate claimants may call the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit to obtain instructions on requesting direct deposit. In addition, the [Direct Deposit form](#) and instructions are available on our Web site.

Reminder: If you file a subsequent new unemployment claim a year or more after filing your current unemployment claim, the computer will still be programmed to make unemployment benefit payments however you last opted to receive payments on the earlier claim, unless you make a change at the time you file the subsequent claim. Ordinarily this will work satisfactorily for you. **It would only be a problem for you if you opted to use Direct Deposit on the earlier claims, but at the time you file the latter claim, you no longer have a banking account or have an account at a different bank and do not tell us of your changed status.** This sequence of events would cause a delay in your receipt of benefits and would be a problem you would have to correct at the financial institution(s) and/or at the local Job Center or Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. **Each time you file a new unemployment claim or your bank account status changes during a benefit year, let us know of any change in your options pertaining to Direct Deposit of your unemployment benefits.**

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Your bank or financial institution information will be kept strictly confidential. It is your responsibility to notify your bank or financial institution of your Direct Deposit arrangement.

Any benefit payment you are eligible to receive before your Direct Deposit request goes into effect will be mailed to your home mailing address.

If you file your weekly claims by “Easy Call,” you will not receive any notification from this agency that your unemployment benefit payment has been deposited into your account. It is your responsibility to verify receipt of payments with your financial institution.

BENEFIT PAYMENT SCHEDULE

If you file continued claims by telephone each week on Sunday or Monday, and utilize Direct Deposit, your payment should be deposited in your account within three to four working days. If you file by telephone each week on Sunday or Monday and utilize the U.S. Postal System for delivery of your benefit checks, your payments will be sent to the post office by the following Wednesday.

If you file continued claims by mail, your benefit checks will be sent to the U.S. Post Office the day after each payorder is processed in the Administrative Office, or will be transferred by Direct Deposit to your account within several days after processing, depending upon which option you have chosen. Both such cycles, from mailing the payorder to receiving the benefit check, will normally run from four to seven days.

GENERAL INFORMATION SECTION

When filing a claim for unemployment benefits, there are many problem areas you should be familiar with. The Louisiana Department of Labor has compiled the following information that should be helpful to you in understanding certain aspects of the unemployment insurance process.

DEDUCTIONS FROM BENEFITS

You must report any wages that you earn, including money you earned from part-time work, for the week in which you earned the wages, even if you weren't paid during the week.

You are allowed to earn up to one half of your weekly benefit amount or \$50.00 (whichever is less) before any deductions are made from your weekly unemployment benefit payment. Any wages over the lesser of the 50% or the \$50.00 amount will be deducted from your weekly benefit amount.

EXAMPLE: If your unemployment weekly benefit is \$181.00, you would be allowed to earn up to \$50.00 before any deduction is made from your unemployment benefit amount. If you worked part-time during a week you are claiming and you earned \$80.00 (gross), your unemployment benefits for that week would be reduced by \$30.00 and you would be sent an unemployment benefit check for \$151.00 instead of the \$181.00 benefit amount.

If you work part-time and earn wages equal to or over your unemployment weekly benefit amount, you will not be eligible for any benefits for that week. You may file continued claims for up to two consecutive weeks indicating that you had excessive earnings in the event that the "excessive wages" were only for that period. This will prevent a break in your unemployment claim and you will not have to report to the local Job Center to reopen your claim for benefits unless you have a separation from that employment, or you fail to claim one of the weeks.

However, if you have three or more consecutive weeks of earnings equal to or greater than your unemployment weekly benefit amount, your claim will not be accepted through "Easy Call," and you must reopen your claim for benefits. You may reopen your claim by Internet at www.Laworks.net or in person at a local Job Center.

A disqualification and/or a deduction (depending on the size of the combined gross payment compared to the size of your weekly benefit amount) will be made from your weekly unemployment benefit amount for any week that you receive any of the following:

- Wages in Lieu of Notice
- Separation Allowance
- Severance Pay (see note below)
- Dismissal Pay
- Tips/gratuity
- Vacation Pay
- Temporary Workers' Compensation
- Military Retirement
- Social Security Pension
- Warn Act Payments
- (Or any other similar periodic payment based on previous work)

NOTE: In addition to its deductibility, severance pay can affect your claim in another way. If you claim one or more weeks in which severance pay is deductible, the total number of weeks you are allotted in unemployment benefits will be reduced on a one to one basis for each such week claimed in which you do not have part-time employment earnings, whether or not you are paid UI benefits for the week. This would have the adverse effect of reducing the total amount of benefits you could receive during a benefit year.

If you have any question as to whether a certain item should be deducted from your unemployment benefits, you should immediately contact your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. Failure to report a deductible item can result in an overpayment on your claim or in denial of benefits.

CHILD SUPPORT

The Louisiana Department of Labor cooperates with the Child Support Recovery Program. When notified by Child Support Recovery, the Louisiana Department of Labor deducts and withholds amounts owed by unemployment claimants for child support obligations. These deductions are forwarded to state and local child support enforcement agencies. The child support deduction or the amount of the deduction is not appealable to the local Job Center. Any questions regarding this deduction should be directed to the local child support agency.

SELF EMPLOYMENT

The requirements to claim and to receive Unemployment Insurance benefits through self-employment, without enrollment in the Self-Employment Assistance Allowance Program, are not the same. Please read this booklet carefully for understanding the differences between enrollment in the Self-Employment Assistance Allowance Program and being gainfully employed in a self-employed status. Questions regarding these two different programs may be directed to your local Job Center.

Income from self-employment is considered as wages and is deductible from unemployment benefits. Therefore, you should report any earnings that you may receive from self-employment during the week in which you earn them. You should also remember that working in self-employment could result in questionable availability for work. If you devote a major portion of your time and effort to self-employment, without being enrolled in the Self-Employment Assistance program, you may be disqualified for benefits on the basis that you are unavailable for work.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE ALLOWANCE

A self-employed individual may receive benefits if that individual is enrolled in the Self-Employment Assistance Allowance program. Applicants must be actively engaged on a full-time basis in activities related to establishing a business and becoming self-employed. These activities may include training, i.e., entrepreneurial training, business counseling and technical assistance.

An individual who fails to participate in self-employment assistance activities or who fails to actively engage on a full-time basis in activities, which may include training, related to establishing a business and becoming self-employed is denied benefits for the week the failure occurs. Please request additional information from your local Job Center.

SUITABLE WORK

Suitable work is determined by your previous training and employment, your physical abilities and the rate of pay involved.

Any job you are offered is considered for suitability by the following factors:

1. Degree of risk to your health, safety or morals
2. Your physical fitness
3. Your experience or training
4. Your prospects for securing work in your regular occupation
5. The distance to the job
6. How long you have been unemployed
7. If the position is vacant due to strike, lockout or other labor dispute
8. If the wages, hours or other conditions of the job including fringe benefits are substantially less than either your previous employment or local prevailing conditions for similar work
9. If the employer required you to join a union or to resign from or refrain from joining a bona fide labor organization

Work is sometimes considered suitable if the gross weekly wages for the job would be equal to or exceed 60% of the normal salary you received during the highest quarter of the base period.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Although you may meet the monetary eligibility requirements for unemployment benefits, you may be disqualified for non-monetary reasons. Louisiana Employment Security Law requires a disqualification for benefits if it is determined that:

1. You left your job without good cause attributable to a substantial change to the employment made by the employer.
2. You were discharged due to misconduct connected with your employment or misconduct that resulted in damage to the employer or his property.
3. You were discharged for the use of illegal drugs or refused to submit to a legal drug test.
4. You failed to apply for suitable work.
5. You failed to accept suitable work.
6. You refused to return to your regular employment when possible.

If you are denied benefits due to any of the above stated reasons, you will be required to return to work covered by unemployment insurance law and earn an amount which equals or exceeds ten times your weekly unemployment benefits and not have a disqualifying separation from the last employer before you will be paid future benefits.

You may also be denied benefits if:

1. You are unemployed due to an active participation or interest in a labor dispute.
2. You are seeking or receiving benefits from another state.
3. You have/will receive deductible payments equal to or greater than your weekly unemployment amount.
4. You fraudulently seek/receive benefits.
5. You filed a subsequent claim and have not worked and earned an amount that equals or exceeds six times your weekly benefit amount or three-thirteenths of the highest quarter in the base period of the newer claim (double dip).

6. You are enrolled in unapproved schooling and you have not worked while attending school.
7. You are a base-period employee of a school board, school system or related school service agency and you have assurance of returning to work during the next semester or work period, and you seek benefits for any holiday or break.
8. You are a professional athlete, participate in sports or athletic events, training or preparation and you are between regular playing seasons and there is reasonable assurance that you will return to this occupation.
9. You are not able and available to work, you failed to report as instructed, or you failed to record an active search for work.
10. You fail to participate in unemployment insurance job search assistance or job placement services or reemployment workshops as instructed. (Participation in the Reemployment Assistance program is mandatory for claimants identified as likely to exhaust regular Unemployment Insurance benefits prior to reentering the workforce.)
11. You fail to actively engage in Self-Employment Assistance Allowance activities as instructed.
12. You are paid Warn Act payments for one or more weeks during your benefit year.

FACT FINDING

Besides the above issues, there are other items which can affect how much unemployment benefits you receive.

If an employer protests your claim for unemployment benefits or there is a question as to your eligibility, a fact-finding interview will be arranged by the local Job Center.

You are responsible for proving that you are able, available and actively seeking work, that you had good cause connected to the employment for leaving a job or for satisfaction of a prior disqualification or a “double dip” disqualification.

The employer has the burden of proving that misconduct was present and that they had good cause to dismiss you from their employ.

It is important that you participate in the fact-finding interview and provide truthful responses to questions by the local Job Center or Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit regarding your unemployment claim.

When your initial claim is filed, you will be questioned as to your reasons for being unemployed. If it is determined that you are unemployed for reasons other than layoff or business closure, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire statement to determine if your reasons for being unemployed are to be considered valid and through no fault of your own. You should be very thorough in your responses. Although you may not consider certain details important, you should be as specific as possible with your responses.

Normally within a four-week period you should receive a non-monetary determination on your separation. Your employer will also be mailed a copy of this determination. You and your employer will be given 15 calendar days to file an appeal should you disagree with the determination.

THE APPEAL PROCESS

If the determination is not satisfactory and you wish to appeal, you should complete the appeal instructions within the time indicated. If the legal 15-day appeal period ends on a Saturday, Sunday or a legal state holiday, the appeals period is extended to the next workday that is not a holiday.

The appeal, if mailed, must be postmarked within 15 calendar days from the mailing date indicated on the determination. If you are an interstate claimant, the office in the state from which you are filing will assist you in this process, or you can mail your appeal to the Interstate Unit in Louisiana.

If the determination is appealed by either you or the employer, a formal hearing with an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will be scheduled. This hearing will be conducted either by telephone or in person depending on the location of the employer in relation to your home. Your notice to appear will indicate the type of hearing to be held and give instructions you should follow in preparation for the hearing.

Normally in-person hearings are conducted at the local Job Center where you filed your claim or the office nearest to your location.

You will be notified by mail of the date and time of the hearing and the issues to be discussed. If it is an in-person hearing, the notice will also contain the location of the local Job Center where the hearing is to be held.

Additional evidence to prove your case may be included in the hearing process. However, prior request must be made to the ALJ so all parties concerned may be notified, if necessary.

The ALJ makes an impartial decision based largely on information presented at the hearing, but also on the contents of your file. It is important that you attend all appeal hearings involving issues on your claim regardless of who appealed such decision. However, if the appellant (or representative) fails to appear or be available timely for the appeal hearing, the ALJ will dismiss the hearing with no decision being made. When the ALJ holds a hearing and makes a decision, a copy of the decision is mailed to you and to the employer. The next level of appeal is to the Board of Review.

Through all levels of the appeals process, a claimant should continue to file all weekly continued claims on a timely basis until a final decision is rendered or the claimant returns to full-time work. Even if a claimant ultimately wins the appeal of a disqualification, he or she will not be paid for any weeks not claimed timely.

THE BOARD OF REVIEW

If you or your employer does not agree with the ALJ's decision, either may file an appeal to the Board of Review. This appeal must be filed or postmarked within 15 calendar days from the mailing date of the decision.

The members of the Board of Review are appointed by the Governor to represent employees, employers and the public equally. The Board is in Baton Rouge at the Louisiana Department of Labor Administrative Office.

Except in unusual circumstances, the Board of Review does not hold formal hearings. The Board members decide each case by reviewing all evidence and testimony already presented to the ALJ. The Board majority may affirm, reverse or modify the decision or send the case back to the ALJ for further review or a new hearing and a second decision. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to both you and your employer. Any further appeal must be made through the District Court process.

OVERPAYMENTS

If you receive benefits to which you are not entitled, you will be liable for repayment of these benefits. The Louisiana Department of Labor may recover any overpayment by either deducting the total from your weekly benefit payments or by requiring you to repay the overpayment. You may choose to repay an overpayment under an installment repayment agreement established by the Department. No benefits will be paid until the overpayment is repaid and it is determined that you meet all eligibility requirements of the law. The law permits the addition of a penalty to overpayment balances on which satisfactory repayments are not made.

If you have an outstanding overpayment and are scheduled to receive a Louisiana state tax refund, these funds could be withheld and utilized as repayment of the overpayment. The Louisiana Department of Labor Fraud Unit may also file liens or garnish wages to recover any fraud overpayment.

Even if you are allowed to have the overpayment deducted from future benefits, you should repay the amount as soon as possible. It is easier to repay the overpayment when you are employed with an income than to have it deducted from your unemployment benefits at a time when you are unemployed with no income.

BENEFITS ARE TAXABLE

All unemployment benefits are fully taxable. Federal income tax is not withheld from your benefits automatically. However, the Louisiana Department of Labor will withhold 10% for your federal income tax from unemployment benefit payments if you so choose.

When you file your new claim for benefits, you will be given the option of having your federal tax withheld from your weekly unemployment benefit amount. You will be allowed only one chance during a given claim to change your original decision as to whether or not to have federal tax deducted from your benefits. After the one allowable change per claim is made, a claimant is required to stay with the changed decision until the end of that claim benefit year. On those weekly unemployment benefit payments made without federal tax deductions, it is still the responsibility of the claimant to report and pay all taxes due on a quarterly basis when such federal tax forms and accompanying payments are due. You should carefully consider this tax-deduction option when filing your claim.

Any such deduction will be made from your weekly unemployment benefit amount, and the Form 1099-G mailed to you at the end of January will show the amount withheld for the prior year.

The information contained on the 1099-G is reported to both the Internal Revenue Service and the state Department of Revenue and Taxation.

If you should have further questions regarding income taxes as they relate to your unemployment claim, you should contact the nearest Internal Revenue Service office.

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Periodically during your benefit year, you will be told by telephone or by mailed message that you are required to complete an Eligibility Review Form found in the end-pages of your BRI booklet and report to or mail it only to your local Job Center. The completed and signed questionnaire will then be reviewed for your availability, job search efforts and ability to work. If an issue arises that could result in a disqualification of benefits, you will be required to report in person to the local Job Center for an interview. Always bring your driver's license, social security card and your LDOL BRI booklet with you when you report in person to the local Job Center for any reason.

Interstate claimants will receive an Eligibility Review Form in the mail with instructions to complete and sign the questionnaire and return it to the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit. If issues arise from review of the questionnaire, additional information may be requested from you.

If during the interview information is obtained that could result in disqualification, you will be asked to refute any erroneous statement or fact to show that you do meet all the eligibility requirements of the law.

The local Job Center will assist you in any way possible with any problems with your claim. You will be advised about what constitutes acceptable eligibility requirements.

QUALITY CONTROL AUDITS

The Quality Control Program is a federally mandated system designed to prevent both error and fraud in the Unemployment Insurance Program. It consists of a review of the employer records, agency actions and records/statements of randomly selected claimants chosen by the computer. The audit is done to make certain that benefits have been correctly paid.

If you are selected for a random audit, you will be notified when and where to report for an interview with the Quality Control Auditor assigned to your case.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The following programs are available to assist unemployed individuals under specific conditions. Additional information about each of these programs is available at your local Job Center.

EX-SERVICE MEMBERS (MILITARY)

Unemployment compensation for ex-service members (UCX benefits) will be paid by this state as an agent of the United States, according to the terms of Louisiana law. The U.S. Secretary of Labor has set up a schedule of pay rates for the various grades of service and these rates will be used to figure your benefit amount. Your UCX benefit entitlement will be computed at the pay grade you held at the time of your most recent separation from military service. All of your wages for military service, including any

payments you may have received for days of unused accrued leave, have been assigned to this state if your present claim is the first claim filed after separation from service. You should keep in mind that military wages, including accrued leave payments occurring after your base period, may be used later to establish entitlement to a second claim. Military severance pay, however, may not be used to compute unemployment benefit entitlement.

You must advise this office of any pension or related payment you are receiving. Disability payments from the Veterans' Administration for service connected disability are not deductible from unemployment benefits. However, retirement pensions and disability payments from the branch of military service are 100% deductible. A determination will be made by this agency whether or not the pension/payment is deductible from UCX benefits. Unused days of military accrued leave are deductible from unemployment benefits. The receipt of such payments will be allocated to the corresponding period that immediately follows separation from the military and will reduce or disallow unemployment benefits for the applicable week(s). According to federal law, a claimant is not eligible for UCX benefits for any week or days within a week when he or she is receiving a subsistence allowance for vocational rehabilitation training or an educational assistance allowance for war orphans, a war widow or for children of totally and permanently disabled veterans. Educational assistance (GI bill) paid by the Veterans' Administration (VA) under one of the following chapters is not deductible: Title 38, Chapters 30, 32, or 34 of the U.S. Code.

Federal law defines federal service for UCX purposes as time spent on active duty in the armed forces or the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Time spent on active duty in a reserve status may not be used unless the service was for a continuous period of 90 days or more. Federal regulations specifically provide that for an individual to qualify for UCX benefits the following conditions must be met:

1. The individual must have been released or discharged under honorable conditions; and
2. The individual must have completed the initial period of service agreed to. If the individual did not complete the initial period of service agreed to, he or she may still qualify if the separation was for one of the following reasons:
 - a. For the convenience of the government under an early release program
 - b. Because of medical disqualifications, pregnancy, parenthood or any service-incurred injury or disability
 - c. Because of hardship, or because of personality disorders or inaptitude, but only if the service was continuous for 365 days or more

Findings as stated above, including periods of military service, the pay grade at the time of separation, and the pay schedule, are final and conclusive and may be changed only by the appropriate branch of the military service. If you feel that the information contained in your military service record is incorrect or incomplete, you may appeal directly to the branch of service.

Federal statutes provide certain legal rights to re-employment with pre-service employers for individuals who leave to enter military service. Additional information regarding re-employment may be obtained from your veterans' employment representative.

You are reminded that you must be able and available for work and make an active search for work to qualify for unemployment benefits.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

The state agency where a former federal employee files his first claim for unemployment benefits (UCFE claim) will determine from the claimant's work record the state to which federal service and wages are to be assigned. This wage assignment is permanent for the duration of the claim unless the assignment occurred through error. Findings by a federal agency whether or not service is defined as federal service and the findings regarding the location of the employee's official duty station are final and conclusive unless a request is made for reconsideration of such findings to the federal agency.

Payment of unused terminal leave is considered wages and is used in computing your monetary entitlement to unemployment benefits. However, your weekly unemployment benefits will be reduced by any terminal leave payments assigned to a period during which unemployment benefits are claimed. According to federal policy, severance/dismissal pay is not considered as wages and will not be used to compute your UCFE benefit entitlement. You must report to your local Job Center or the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit any pension you are receiving or any change in a pension you previously reported.

Except for being put on the separating agency's re-employment list, and except for the right to displace group III employees in that agency, all other special placement assistance for other federal employment must be obtained on the initiative of the separated employee. Generally, placement in a federal agency is obtained through contact with the personnel office of that agency. If you are drawing UCFE benefits, you will be asked from time to time about your efforts to regain federal employment or obtain any other suitable work.

The receipt of workers' compensation under federal law will result in a denial or reduction of UCFE benefits.

DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (DUA)

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available to unemployed workers or self-employed individuals, which become unemployed as a direct result of a declared disaster. DUA is also available to those individuals who become the breadwinner or major support of a household, due to the death of the head of household as a direct result of a declared disaster. Once the President issues a declaration of disaster for individual assistance, the Louisiana Department of Labor announces the filing period and affected parishes for DUA. Individuals have 30 days from this announcement date to file their claims. Documentation to substantiate proof of employment is required. Potential DUA recipients should familiarize themselves with additional rights and responsibilities described in "Disaster Unemployment Assistance Benefit Rights" (form DUA 4), which is available at any Job Center.

APPROVED TRAINING

You may receive unemployment benefits if you are attending a training course approved by the local Job Center. Enrollment in a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program may also be considered as attending approved training and must be approved by the local Job Center.

While you are attending an approved training course, you will be exempt from making an active search for work to meet the availability requirements. However, should you discontinue the training course, you will

have to meet all the eligibility requirements of the law to continue to receive benefits. Interstate claimants should contact the Louisiana Interstate Liable Unit for information on approved training.

EXTENDED BENEFITS (EB)

When unemployment reaches a certain level, Louisiana has a provision for extended unemployment benefits for up to 13 additional weeks. This provision is only available during periods of high unemployment and must be declared. Extended benefits are for claimants who have exhausted their regular or basic UI benefits but have not reached the Benefit Year Ending (BYE) date of the claim. You will be notified by the Louisiana Department of Labor when extended benefits are in effect.

TRADE READJUSTMENT ACT (TRA)

Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) is available to certain individuals who are unemployed due to the import of products from foreign countries and covered under a certified petition.

If you are qualified and elect to receive TRA, your eligibility period is the 104-week period beginning with the first week, which follows the week of your most recent qualifying separation from the trade-affected employment. You must exhaust all rights to regular unemployment benefits and you must be either enrolled in training or covered under a certified waiver of training before you can begin to receive TRA. The maximum amount of basic TRA is limited to 52 times your weekly benefit amount less any unemployment compensation you were entitled to receive. Additional benefits and remedial benefits may also be payable for approved training. Potential TRA recipients should familiarize themselves with timely filing requirements and other rights and responsibilities described in "Important Notice to TAA Trainees" (form TRA 5B), which is available at any Job Center or from our Web site www.LAWORKS.net.

ALTERNATIVE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (ATAA)

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) is available to certain individuals who are at least 50 years of age and unemployed due to the import of products from foreign countries and covered under a certified petition which includes ATAA certification. If you are qualified and elect to receive ATAA, you must obtain qualified full-time employment with an annual salary of less than \$50,000, excluding overtime, not more than 26 weeks after the date of separation from the adversely affected employment. ATAA can supplement a decrease in the worker's salary equal to 50% of the difference between their trade-affected wage and their new lower wage, up to a maximum of \$10,000 during a two-year period. Once an individual begins receiving ATAA, he or she is no longer eligible to receive Trade Adjustment Assistance training, job search relocation allowances and/or TRA benefits covered by the same petition and/or vice-versa.

HEALTH COVERAGE TAX CREDIT (HCTC)

Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) is a federal tax credit that pays 65% of the qualified health premiums paid by eligible individuals covered by the Trade Act of 1974 as amended. The credit may be taken at the end of the year on the individual's personal income tax return, or, in some cases, may be received in advance. Potential HCTC recipients should contact the HCTC hotline toll-free at 1-866-628-HCTC (4282) or at 1-866-626-HCTC (4282) for TDD/TTY callers.

PARTIAL PROGRAM CLAIMS

There is an alternative type of specialized claim available for those claimants in some geographical areas who work for employers that are contracted with the Louisiana Department of Labor. Unemployment benefits under the partial program are paid to workers who are still in the employ of their regular employer who is covered by contract under this program. Because of lack of work, these claimants are employed less than a full work week and earn less than either their customary full-time weekly wage or their weekly benefit amount. Ordinarily, such claimants do not go on regular weekly claim filing. Instead, they file new and continued claim documents through their employer who, in turn, transmits all documents to the department.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROFILING

The Louisiana Department of Labor provides initial reemployment services and coordinates referrals to intensive services for individuals who have filed a claim for Unemployment Insurance benefits and are chosen to participate in the Reemployment Assistance Program for workers identified at the time an Initial Claim for benefits is filed. The Reemployment Assistance Program selects those individuals who are most likely to exhaust regular Unemployment Insurance benefits prior to reentering the workforce.

Claimants who are selected for this program will be notified by mail that they are scheduled to participate in a Job Search Assistance Orientation designed to help them return to gainful employment. Participation in this orientation is mandatory for any claimant selected who is currently receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits. If you are not chosen to participate in this Reemployment Assistance Program, but wish to do so, you may contact your local Job Center to receive information on attending a scheduled Job Search Assistance Orientation session.

WARNING: The law prescribes penalties for false statements. You could be fined and/or imprisoned for knowingly making a false statement in order to obtain unemployment benefits. An alien convicted of a felony for unemployment insurance fraud could lose his or her right to work in this country and be deported.

WORK RECORD

Gross wages earned during any week that you claim unemployment insurance benefits must be reported for the week in which the wages were earned even if you are not paid those wages during that week. Use this form to record your work record so you can properly report them when you claim weekly benefits.

To compute the gross wages that you earned, follow this simple equation. Take the total number of hours worked between the hours of 12:01 a.m. Sunday and midnight of the following Saturday, and multiply the total number of hours worked by the rate of pay per hour. This will give you the total gross wages earned during the week you are claiming.

[illegible]

RECORD OF WORK SEARCH CONTACTS

You are required to keep an accurate record of your weekly work searches. This information will be helpful to you in responding to the questions on the Voice Response System and when you are required to complete the Eligibility Review forms.

[illegible]

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Print Your Name

Your Social Security Number

To maintain your eligibility requirements for unemployment insurance benefits, a review of your work search record is required. When instructed, you must complete the items below and **report to the local Job Center or mail this form to the local Job Center at the address** found in the back of this booklet. Failure to return this form could result in your being disqualified for benefits. Do not telephone the local Job Center.

Answer the following questions:

1. Are you attending any school or training program now? If so, list the name of the school and the course of study:

2. Is there any reason why you cannot look for a job or accept one now? (Such as a lack of transportation, a physical disability, pregnancy, childcare problems, etc.)

3. Are you working full-time, part-time, in self-employment, on a commission basis, in operating a farm or as an elected official, etc?(circle any that apply)

4. Do you have a definite prospect of employment? (In other words, have you been given a date to begin work by a specific employer?) If so, list the name of the employer and the date you will begin working.

Record of work search or union contacts:

List one job contact you have made in each of the last three (3) weeks:

Date	NAME OF COMPANY OR NAME OF UNION OFFICER CONTACTED

Certification: I have answered these questions and provided a record of my work search contacts to obtain unemployment benefits. I know that this information is subject to verification and that the law provides penalties for false statements.

Your Signature	Today's Date

Please Print Your Mailing Address:	
Your City, State and Zip Code:	
Your Telephone Number:	

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Print Your Name

Your Social Security Number

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Your Signature	Today's Date

Please Print Your Mailing Address:	
Your City, State and Zip Code:	
Your Telephone Number:	

ELIGIBILITY REVIEW

Print Your Name

Your Social Security Number

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2. Is there any reason why you cannot look for a job or accept one now? (Such as a lack of transportation, a physical disability, pregnancy, childcare problems, etc.)

3. Are you working full-time, part-time, in self-employment, on a commission basis, in operating a farm or as an elected official, etc?(circle any that apply)

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Certification: I have answered these questions and provided a record of my work search contacts to obtain unemployment benefits. I know that this information is subject to verification and that the law provides penalties for false statements.

Your Signature	Today's Date

Please Print Your Mailing Address:	
Your City, State and Zip Code:	
Your Telephone Number:	

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**Louisiana Department of Labor
Job Center Offices**

Office	Address	Easy Call Number
Allen Job Center	117 Hwy 1152 (Pelican Hwy), Oakdale, LA	(337) 238-6499
Avoyelles Job Center	2104 Cleco Street, Mansura, LA	(318) 487-5006
Bastrop One-Stop	250 Holt Street, Bastrop, LA	(318) 283-0877
Baton Rouge Job Ctr	1991 Wooddale Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA	(225) 342-8731
Baton Rouge One Stop	4523 Plank Rd., Baton Rouge, LA	(225) 342-8731
Beauregard One-Stop	1808 Hwy 190 West Su #G, DeRidder, LA	(337) 462-5744
Bogalusa Job Center	438 Avenue B, Bogalusa, LA	(985) 732-6659
Bossier City Job Ctr	4000 Viking Drive, Bossier, LA	(318) 676-5501
Crowley Job Center	11 N. Parkenson, Crowley, LA	(337) 788-4978
E. Jefferson One Stop	6701 Airline Highway, Metairie, LA	(504) 568-7385
E St Tammany One Stop	316-A East Howze Beach Lane, Slidell, LA	(504) 645-3575
Ferriday Job Center	105 N.E. E. Wallace Boulevard, Ferriday, LA	(318) 757-7548
Franklin Acadian Works	600 Main St., Franklin, LA	(985) 380-2446
Gonzales Job Center	1721 D South Burnside Avenue, Gonzales, LA	(225) 647-1032
Hammond Job Center	1711 Nashville Avenue, Hammond, LA	(985) 543-4114
Houma Job Center	7528 Main Street, Houma, LA	(985) 876-8804
Lafayette Job Center	706 East Vermillion, Lafayette, LA	(337) 262-4917
LaPlace Job Center	2701 New Highway 51, LaPlace, LA	(985) 652-7346
LA Works Calcasieu Workforce Center	4250 Fifth Ave., Lake Charles, LA	(337) 475-8608
Minden Job Center	310 Homer Drive, Minden, LA	(318) 371-3097
Morgan City Job Ctr	7710 Highway 182 E, Morgan City, LA	(985) 380-2446
Natchitoches Job Ctr	303 Bienville Street, Natchitoches, LA	(318) 357-7102
New Iberia Job Center	124 E. Main Street, New Iberia, LA	(337) 373-0183
New Orleans Job Ctr	1530 Thalia Street, New Orleans, LA	(504) 568-7385
N.O. East Job Center	5741 Crowder Road, New Orleans, LA	(504) 568-7385
Opelousas Job Center	230 West Bellevue Street, Opelousas, LA	(337) 948-0302
Ouachita One-Stop	3158 Louisville Ave., Monroe, LA	(318) 362-4276
Plaquemines Job Center	133 Civic Dr., Ste A, Port Sulphur, LA	(504) 568-7385
Rapides Job Center	5610 B Coliseum Boulevard, Alexandria, LA	(318) 487-5006
Ruston Sub-Office	307 N. Homer St., Ste. 306, Ruston, LA	(318) 251-4164
St. Bernard Job Center	3700 LaFontaine St. Bldg B Rm 140, Chalmette, LA	(504) 568-7385
St. Martinville Acadiana	1109 S. Main St, St. Martinville, LA	(337) 373-0183
Shreveport Job Center	2900 Dowdell Street, Shreveport, LA	(318) 676-5501
Tallulah Job Center	405 North Cedar Street, Tallulah, LA	(318) 574-8657
Thibodaux Job Center	627 Jackson St, Thibodaux, LA	(985) 876-8804
Vernon Job Center	2501 McRae Street Ste A., Leesville, LA	(337) 238-6499
Walker Area Job Center	9384 Florida Suite B, Walker, LA	(225) 342-8731

Office	Address	Easy Call Number
W.Jefferson Job Center	2150 Westbank Expressway Suite 401, Harvey, LA	(504) 568-7385
W. St.Tammany	19376 North Third Street, Covington, LA	(985) 893-6264
Winnsboro Job Center	209-B Fair Avenue, Winnsboro, LA	(318) 435-2195
Interstate Liable Unit	PO Box 94094 B.R., LA 70804-9094 Interstate-CWC-Federal Unit R#386	(225) 342-8731 / (504) 568-7385